
PLACE AND ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE MEDIA IN IVORY COAST : AN EGALITARIAN PRINCIPLE STILL PROBLEMATIC

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ABSTRACT

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If there are major issues that concern our contemporary society, one cannot help citing, among the priorities, the question of the advancement of women and of parity. Indeed, for decades, following the first world conference on the status of women in Mexico City in 1975, it is recognized that a society cannot experience integral, sustainable and harmonious development without the consideration and participation of women. From the rural world to the city, the role and place of women in all sectors of activity are regularly analysed with a view to learning about their evolution over time. Similarly, the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995, under the theme “Equality, Development and Peace”, developed an action plan defining twelve (12) Priority areas including the media where measures were deemed necessary to achieve gender equality. Through this article, we try to assess the

impact of such initiatives in favor of the emancipation of women in Ivorian society, especially in the media sector. Our study covered 22 news organizations from all sectors (television, press, radio, press agency, online media). With the theory of naturalistic thought or the sexual division of labour, and based on interviews with 56 media women and/or their editors, we try to understand the place, the role and the activities of women in the Ivorian media, as well as the representations made of them. The results of our research show that, despite some progress, the media world in Ivory Coast still remains unequal in terms of parity, in the image of the entire Ivorian society.

Keywords: Ivory Coast, women, media, parity, role, responsabilités.

Introduction

Despite the progress that can be seen here and there, the media world in Ivory Coast remains a reflection of a still unequal society, with regard to the issue of gender equity. An ideal advocated for decades by opinion leaders, both national and international and equally official as well as civil society.

In fact, since the second half of the 20th century, through the dissemination of international fundamental principles based on gender equality, it is increasingly recognized that there can be no viable democracy or development without the participation of women (...). The Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995, under the theme “Equality, Development and Peace”, developed an action plan identifying twelve (12) priority areas including the media, where measures were deemed necessary to achieve gender equality (Ibitowa and Koffi-Djah, 2022).

Indeed, the media are valuable relays and vectors for the promotion of values and ideals; thanks to the weight of Word, the power of the image and sound, they have a significant persuasive force and exert an influence on the public.

It is clear that in the second half of the last century and even more in the last twenty years, the media have taken an increasing part in the influence they exert on other powers, especially the executive (...). Today, there is no public decision that is not accompanied by a question about its

communication; the timing of the announcement, its organization, the “elements of language” are really part of the decision – how it will be received by the media, Then the one from which they will transmit it to the opinion is constantly at the heart of the decision-maker’s reflection. In that sense, certainly the media is a power. In the same way that the executive or legislative authorities question the legality of a text and the litigation risks involved, they question the perception of a decision and the related media risks. One could even argue without too much hesitation that what matters today is as much the “how to make known” as the “how to do” Kessler (2012).

Omnipresent in our daily lives, the media participate more than ever in processes of socialization of individuals: they set the framework for what is visible, audible, or even dicible (Coulomb-Gully, 2019).

In Ivory Coast, many civil society organizations work for gender equality in all parts of society, including the media sector where the Network of Women Journalists and Communication Professionals (Ref JPCI) Advocates for a better representation of women in the media and in the media.

The purpose of this study is to take stock of the situation in order to determine the impact on the ground of all these actions to promote women, particularly in the area of media in Ivory Coast. The place and status of women in the media, as well as the functions they hold within their various editorial boards, in terms of egalitarian and equity principles, are at the heart of our problem. How many are they compared to men, at what level of the editorial hierarchy are they, how do they combine their status as women with the demands of journalism? These are all interests that this article attempts to highlight.

1. Theoretical and methodological approach

To succeed in this work, we bring together the theory of naturalistic thought or the sexual division of labour carried out by Danièle Kergoat (1982; 2000) who, through her reflections, helped define the term «sexual division of labour» and forged the concept widely used in French-speaking research on social sex relations. It emphasizes the tension that crosses the social field and the issues around which are formed social groups with antagonistic interests. According to her, the sexual division of labour is the issue that determines gender relations. If it is modulated according to places and times, the sexual division of labour has as characteristic the priority assignment of men to the productive sphere, and of women to the reproductive sphere; Above all, it organizes the capture by men of functions with high added social value (political, religious, military, etc.). This form of social division of labour has two organizing principles: the principle of separation (there are

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works of men and works of women) and the hierarchical principle (a man’s work is «worth» more than a woman’s work).

For example, in employment, social sex relationships result in forms of de-qualification of women’s skills (Lépinard and Lieber, 2020).

Inequalities between women and men manifest themselves in all social fields: educational, professional, political and family (...). That there are differences between individuals is obvious. The problem is that differences lead to inequalities. The difference in gender is a biological reality. But the respective places assigned to women and men in society are a social construction, not a natural order (...). Inequalities between women and men have been built historically and have been justified by a natural inferiority -in the biological sense- of women. The constitutional principles of equal rights for all individuals, women and men, have long been ignored. In France, for example, it was not until 1945 that women had the right to vote and 1965 that they had the right to hold a bank account or practice a profession without their husband’s permission. Even today, equality of right does not lead to equality of fact (...) (Milewski, 2019).

In France, prejudices and stereotypes about the social roles of men and women still persist in this 21st century. In a study conducted by Adrien Papuchon on behalf of the Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques (INSEE), it is noted that “Domestic work remains mainly carried out by women, especially in families with children.. But the gendered nature of social life is not only seen through practice: many people think that the gender of individuals helps determine or must determine what they do and what they aspire to. For one in three, the different positions of women and men in professional and private life are explained as much by biological reasons as by the education received, However, the opinions expressed do not tend to portray women as less competent or less likely to engage in certain activities than men. On the other hand, The view that women would have and are more likely to have superior child care skills persists, with one in two saying that mothers are better able to meet the needs and expectations of children than fathers. “parental vocation” of women appears to be the keystone allowing the articulation between declared identical competences and a social division of labour still largely organized according to the gender of individuals (Papuchon, 2017).

Thus the sexual division of labour assigns women and men to specific social roles because of their alleged biological and reproductive characteristics (Lépinard and Lieber, Op. cit.)At the same time, it enshrines the differential treatment of men and women and the natural dimension of the so-called female destiny.

This theory is corroborated by the model of male professional excellence highlighted by Sany Montañola, Béatrice Damian-Gaillard and Eugénie Saitta (2022) for whom "one of the structural

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mechanisms involved in the reproduction of male dominance in editorial work is the logic of work organization. These reinforce the precariousness of women, who are more frequently employed on fixed-term contracts, freelance and part-time contracts”.

Our study on the place of women in the media in Ivory Coast is thus based on this main premise in order to understand the missions assigned to them within the editorial boards of these news organizations as well as the functions and responsibilities they assume. The question is whether, with equal competence, value-added and hierarchical positions are equally occupied by men and women or whether there is male hegemony in these organisations.

From a methodological perspective, we alternate qualitative and quantitative approaches to analyze the status and role of women in Ivorian media. As stated by Campenhoudt & Quivy (2011), the purpose of the research is to answer the original question. To this end, the researcher formulates hypotheses and makes the observations that they require. The next step is to determine whether the information collected corresponds to the assumptions. To collect the data, we mobilized the techniques of document search and maintenance.

Through the qualitative approach, we describe the situation of women in the Ivorian media; it was a matter of gathering the impressions, opinions and views of women media workers on their professional practices within their respective editorial boards. To do this, in addition to documentary research, we opted for semi-directional interview. Among the various possible forms of oral information collection, the sociologist attaches particular importance to the semi-directional interview, also called centered interview (Combessie, 2007) or “qualitative, in-depth interview”. It is based on fairly generally formulated and open questions. It provides an opportunity to ask new questions if the interviewee raises an unknown aspect. Unlike the questionnaire, the research interview establishes a special relationship between the researcher and the interviewee.

It is used to test hypotheses and generate new ones. In the course of our research, we conducted interviews with 56 media women and/or their editors, working in the following twenty-two (22) news organizations, with the number of women interviewed in brackets:

- 04 televisions : RTI (9), RTI2 (7), Live TV (4), NCI (3)
- 04 radios : Radio Côte d’Ivoire (4), Vibe Radio (0), Radio Al Bayane (1), Fréquence 2 (0)
- 08 newspapers : Fraternité Matin (4), Femmes d’Afrique (2), Notre voie (0), Le Patriote (2), Le Nouveau Réveil (2), Soir Info (1), L’Inter (2), L’éléphant déchaîné (0)
- 01 press agency : Ivorian Press Agency (7)
- et 05 online media : Abidjan.net (1), Linfodrome (2), Elle-Côte d’Ivoire (3), Ivoirehandicaptv.net (1), Fratmat.info (1).

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Notre Voie and Vibe Radio do not have media women in their midst. This explains the figure of 0 interviewed about them. With respect to Frequence 2 and TL'éléphant déchaîné, although there are two female journalists in these media, we were unable to interview them because they were not available during the study.

The main objective of the interview with the editors was to understand the environment and context in which women in the media operate and their perceptions of them. The data collected was the subject of a thematic content analysis. This choice was made to make the most of the data collected and to identify in the speeches elements of language that evoke topics related to the place of women in the Ivorian media.

Thematic analysis, or more precisely thematic content analysis (TCA), is a method of analysis consisting of “identifying recurring general themes in verbal or textual expressions that appear under various more concrete contents” (Mucchielli, 1996: 259) ; in other words, the thematic analysis consists in «systematically identifying, grouping and, alternatively, discursive examination of the themes addressed in a corpus» (Mucchielli & Paillé, 2008: 162).

Our analysis was carried out according to the following main themes: number of journalists in the newsroom, number of women in the media, nature of the positions occupied by women, number of hierarchical positions occupied by women, the tasks assigned to them, the marital status of women in the media and the impact of their status as women on their performance.

In constructing the discourse, the diachronic and synchronic double approach was adopted. It allowed both a chronological and diachronic analysis (through a presentation of tables that help to observe the solidarity, the links, the coherences and the different parts) of the place and the role of women in the Ivorian media. In doing so, we have sought to achieve “the inseparable complementarity of narrative and painting in any economic or social history” (Prost, 1996).

2. Media and gender promotion: an overview¹

The Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995, under the theme "Equality, Development and Peace", developed a plan of action defining twelve (12) priority areas, including the media, in which measures were deemed necessary to achieve gender equality. These axes were reiterated in the context of the commemoration of Beijing + 5 at the twenty-third special session of the United Nations General Assembly held at the Headquarters of the United Nations in New York from 5 to 9 June 2000 on the theme "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace in the twenty-first century". The session adopted a Political Declaration and an outcome document entitled "Further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for

Action". It is in the same dynamic that the media are mobilized and solicited to bring this cause as on the occasion of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) held in Tunis in 2005, sanctioned by the adoption of the "Women and Media" action plan. Two years earlier, in response to issues related to the image of women in the media, the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (2003) expressed concern about the functioning and content of the media. The issue of stereotyping was particularly focused on the narrow range of representations of women in the media and the sexually reifying nature of women's imagery. The researchers' criticisms of the media treatment for this purpose show that the struggle for the advancement of women is long, proven and a milestone. This issue on the emancipation of women at the cultural, political, economic and social level must be thought of by the media with the 4 "R" foundations of democratization that are: Representation, Rules of Law, Recognition and Redistribution. According to Srebeny's (2005) approach, when the term representation is taken in its sense of mediation, it is clear that the media in society represent a threat to cultural diversity.

In many countries, the author insists, struggles against sexist and distorted descriptions of women and gender expression in the mainstream media are on the agenda. Knowing full well that the media are essential as tools, spaces for debate and channels for making one's voice heard. In the analysis of the issue, the Global Media Monitoring (GMMP), i.e. the Global Media Observatory on Gender (OMMG), aims to examine at regular intervals the representation of men and women in the media. According to a study carried out in 71 countries and presented in 1994 at the Bangkok International Conference on Women and Communication, the visibility of women in the news media remains low and progress almost insignificant. Only 21% of news items deal with women, whether they are subjects or subjects of news. They are mainly presented by stars and "ordinary" people, rarely as figures of authorities (Coulomb-Gully, 2011).

The 2010 edition of this study marks a new stage according to the author with 108 countries involved. Research covers 55% of the world's countries, totalling 82% of the world's population. As a result, 76% of the subjects or objects of the information are men and 24% of women. The reference to their physical appearance and the tendency to portray them as victims largely characterize the representation of women.

3. Results

Ivory Coast, a strong underrepresented female potential

The reality in Ivory Coast shows women media with high potential, with rich and varied training, under-represented in the editorial boards.

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3.1. Pronounced under-representation of women

In general, the mapping of the media studied presents a feminine desert within the newsrooms. A categorical reading of the data indicates that news agencies, represented by the AIP (Avorian Press Agency), offer the best female presence rate with 7 women for 10 men (41.17%), followed by television (31%), radio (26.78%), online media (20.51%) and the press (17.52%).

Table 1: Representation of women in the media in editorial boards

N°	Media	Number of women	Number of men	Total	Rates in %
1	RTI1	14	26	40	35%
2	RT2	7	14	21	33.33%
3	Life TV	6	18	24	25%
4	NCI	4	11	15	26.66%
	Television subtotal	31	69	100	31%
5	Radio Côte d'Ivoire	8	19	27	29.63%
6	Vibe Radio	0	3	3	0%
7	Radio Al Bayane	5	15	20	25%
8	Fréquence 2	2	4	6	33.33%
	Radio subtotal	15	41	56	26,78%
9	Fraternité Matin	8	30	38	21.05%
10	Notre voie	0	17	17	0%
11	Le Patriote	2	16	18	11.11%
12	Le Nouveau Réveil	2	22	24	8.33%
13	Soir Info	1	12	13	7.69%
14	L'Inter	2	11	13	15,38%
15	L'Eléphant déchaîné	1	4	5	20%
16	Femme d'Afrique	8	1	9	88.88%
	Press subtotal	24	113	137	17.52%
17	AIP	7	10	17	41.17%
	Press agency subtotal	7	10	17	41,17%
18	Abidjan.net	1	4	5	20%
19	Linfodrome	2	10	12	16.66%

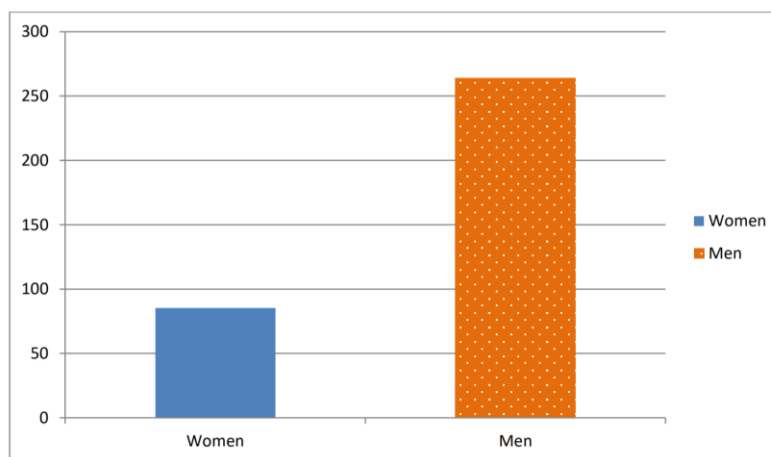
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20	Elle-Côte d'Ivoire	3	4	7	42.85%
21	Ivoirehandicaptv.net	1	4	5	20%
22	Fraternité.info	1	9	10	10%
	Online media subtotal	8	31	39	20.51%
	Grand total	85	264	349	24.35%
	General percentage	24.35%	75.64%	100%	

Source : Our study

Women-themed media such as Femmes d'Afrique (42.85%), Elle-Côte d'Ivoire (88.88%), have more women than men among them, at a time when certain media (Notre Voie, Vibe Radio) have none or only anecdotally with only one female presence in the workforce. This is the case of Soir Info, L'Elephant Déchaîné, Fratmat.info, Abidjan.net and Ivoirehandicap.tv.

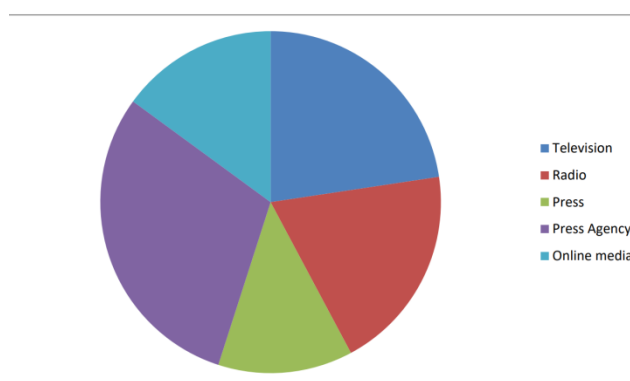
Graph 1: Comparative histogram of the number of women compared to men in all media studied



Source : Our study

More than the figures, this graph very eloquently illustrates the gap that exists between the number of women (24.35%) and that of men (75.64%) in the newsrooms subject to our study. Brought back to the different media genres, the graph below shows the low rate of women in the press where the press agencies are doing well.

Graph 2: Comparative pie chart of the number of women compared to men by media sector



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Source : Our study

3.2. What responsibilities within the editorial staff?

From one editorial office to another, the responsibilities entrusted to women vary. But overall, the trend is average. Thirteen media outlets (59%) compared to nine (41%) have women within their ranks who hold positions of responsibility at various levels: publication director, editorial director, editor, head of department, etc. Nevertheless, taken by editorial staff, the rate of women who assume responsibilities is largely low. It is less than 3%. In media such as Abidjan.net, Le Patriote, Notre Voie, L'Inter, Soir Info or Vibe Radio, no woman holds a hierarchical position.

Table 2: Media in which women assume responsibilities

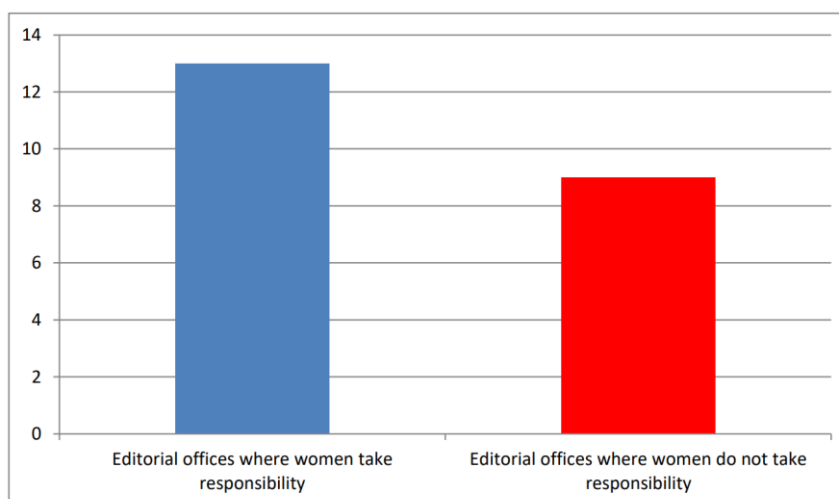
N°	Media	Women in positions of responsibility
1	NCI	Yes
2	RTI1	Yes
3	RTI2	Yes
4	Abidjan.net	No
5	Elle-Côte d'Ivoire	Yes
6	Radio Albayane	Yes
7	Fraternité Matin	Yes
8	Femmes d'Afrique.	Yes
9	Le Patriote	No
10	L'éléphant déchainé	Yes
11	Ivoirehandicaptv.net	Yes
12	Notre Voie	No
13	Agence Ivoirienne de Presse	Yes
14	Soir Info	No
15	L'Inter	No
16	L'Infodrome	Yes
17	Le Nouveau Réveil	No
18	Fratmat.info	No
19	Radio Côte d'Ivoire	Yes
20	Fréquence 2	No

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21	Life TV	Yes
22	Vibe Radio	No
	Number of media in which the woman assumes responsibilities	Number of media in which the woman does not assume responsibility
	13	9
Rate	59%	41%

Source : Our study

Graph 3: Comparative histogram of the media in which women assume responsibilities



Source : Our study

3.3. Profile, professional life and private life

They are publication directors, photographers, video editors, journalist reporters, editors-in-chief, department heads, editors, data entry operators, radio directors, program directors. There are many of them, with rich and varied backgrounds and training, these media women, in their prime or in their sixties, who combine professional and private life.

3.3.1. A rich and varied profile

Aged under 30 or approaching their sixties, almost all (more than 96%) of the women in the media that we interviewed have a level of education greater than or equal to BAC+2, in various fields of training, mainly in communication and journalism. More than 60% among them have the level of BAC+2 to BAC+6. This shows their fairly high level of education and their ability to adequately exercise the profession of journalism.

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Table 3: Socio-educational and demographic characteristics of women in the media

N°	Categories	Marital status					Level of studies				Age groups			
		brides or as couple	Singles	Divorced	Child	Childless	Secondary level	Baccalaureate +2	Baccalaureate +3	Baccalaureate +4 and more	Less of 30 years	30 to 39 years old	40 à 49 years old	50 years and over
1	Press	9	4		10	3	2	3	1	7	1	3	5	4
	Press sector rate	69,23%	37,77%		76,92%	27,08%	15,38%	23,08%	7,69%	53,85%	7,69%	23,08%	38,46%	30,77%
2	Radio		4	1	3	2				5		3	2	
	Radio sector rate		80%	20%	60%	40%				100%		60%	40%	
3	Television	9	13	1	11	12		2	9	12	7	10	6	
	Television sector rate	39,13%	56,52%	4,35%	47,83%	52,17%		8,70%	39,13	52,17%	30,43%	43,48%	26,09	
4	Press Agency	3	2	2	3	4				7		1	4	2
	Press Agency sector rate	42,86%	28,57%	28,57%	42,86%	57,14%				100%		14,29%	57,14%	28,57%
5	Online media	6	2		5	3		1	3	4	3	1	4	
	Online media sector rate	75%	25%		62,5%	37,5%		12,5%	37,5%	50%	37,5%	12,5%	50%	
	Subtotal	27	25	4	32	24	2	6	13	35	11	18	21	6
	Grand total		56		56			56				56		
	General rate	48,21%	44,64%	7,15%	57,14%	42,86%	3,57%	10,71%	23,22%	62,5%	19,64%	32,14%	37,5%	10,72%

Source : Our study

As shown in Table 3 above and Graph 4 below, in terms of marital status, the highest rate of marriage or cohabitation is recorded in the online media sectors (75%) and the press (69.23%), while the lowest rates are driven by the audiovisual sector with 80% singles for radio and 56.52% for television (see Graphic 5 below) . The high rate of celibacy in the audiovisual field could be explained by the fact that the women who work there are more exposed to the phenomenon of stardom, which pushes them to postpone marriage as far as possible in order to remain famous for just as long. Marriage or life as a couple could be an obstacle to their development and a brake on their career, in a field where being beautiful and single are weapons of seduction and capture of the public and many admirers. This reality is not conducive to the press sector where discretion is required.

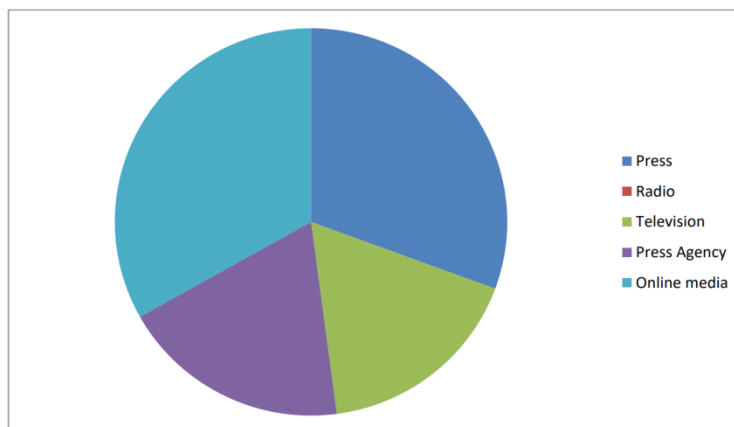
However, despite their status, these media professionals mostly have children, even in the television and radio sectors where they are rarely married, with respective childbearing rates of 60 and 47.83%.

In terms of age, the youngest are concentrated in the fields of radio, with 60% from 30 to 39 years old, and television 43.48% for the same age group. These figures support the previous hypothesis. Younger, media women in this age category tell themselves that they still have time to get married and therefore do not find it necessary to break with celibacy. Conversely, the oldest are found in the press sectors with 38.46% (40 to 49 years old) and 30.77% (50 years old and over), online media (50% between 40 and 49 years old) and news agencies with more than 57% aged between 40 and

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49. Here too, our hypothesis is confirmed in the opposite direction; increasingly older, women working in these media sectors feel the urgency of finding a spouse, hence the high rate of marriage or cohabitation among them.

Graphic 4 : Pie chart showing the percentage of married women or women in couples by media sector



Source : Our study

Graphic 5 : Pie chart showing the percentage of single women by media sector



Source : Our study

3.3.2. Professional life and private life

The previous section showed us the probable influence of professional activity on the private life of media women, mainly with regard to their marital status. But it's not just that. Married, divorced, single or living as a couple, with or without children, these media professionals more or less happily combine their professional life with their private life, not without some difficulties, as the following testimonials can attest.

Fraternité Matin

Head of Cultural Department

54 years old, BAC+6 level, married, mother of 2 children

I was recruited in 2013 as an editor in the Service société.

I provide media coverage of all cultural events both in Ivory Coast and elsewhere in the world. I do my best to manage the service. My line managers ask me for the same performance as men and we are treated on the same footing and benefit from the same salary for an equivalent position. I accomplish my mission without complex. However, the work is too restrictive for a woman. Late return. Often, I have to continue my work at home, writing articles. It's not easy overall. Women must always show competence and firmness in order to be respected by men.

Ivoirehandicaptv.net

Marina NOUAN, 43 years old, BAC+5 level, married, mother of one child

Director of publication of Ivoirehandicaptv.net

I am the only female editor out of 4 journalists. My employer expects me to have the same professional requirements as men. They are satisfied with me. As publication director, my job consists of supervising the writing, ensuring compliance with the editorial line and validating all articles before publication. I am treated on the same footing as my male colleagues and I receive the same salary as them. I am paid under the inter-professional collective agreement.

My working day usually starts with a brief meeting during which a menu is presented. There are proposals for articles and reports from collaborators that must be validated. Since my job is a supervisory job, I usually read all the articles that need to be published. I also write articles and also do reports.

Life TV

News Coordinator (television news) when recruited in 2021

Today News Coordinator and Editor.

27 years old, BAC+5 level, single without children.

My job is to be the conductor by proposing current topics to the editors. I help journalists and technicians. I'm kind of the supervisor of all the news. I am treated on the same footing as male colleagues. I aspire to be an editor. Since I come back a little late, around 9 p.m., I start work at 10 a.m., leaving my home at 9 a.m. When I arrive, I take care of the driver, to find out if all the elements are in order. place and I send them to the control room while making sure that the journalists have all the information they need, then I go into the studio to follow the progress of the news. Afterwards, I go home. Regarding the status of women in the media, I think there is an

improvement compared to previous years. But there is still a lot to do before we can talk about equality between men and women.

AIP (Avorian Press Agency)

Journalist reporter when recruited in 1999

Today editor-in-chief in charge of international affairs

48 years old, BAC+5 level, divorced, no children

My mission is to organize my department, manage my staff, correct and publish articles. My hierarchy expects the same performance from me as men and I accomplish my tasks without complex. I am always cited as an example and I have won more national and international awards than my male colleagues. Moreover, on a professional level, they refer to me in case of difficulties. I get the same salary as my fellow editors. I leave my house on time (no later than 6 a.m.); I work without a break until the evening because of the intensity of the task. As soon as I get home, I have just enough time to bathe, pray and dine and I can often work until 10 p.m., 11 p.m., or even midnight.

During this study, we interviewed the hierarchical managers of media women to get their opinion on the performance of their collaborators. It is clear that the opinions are favorable for a large majority.

3.4. The view of the chefs

If the opinions of the leaders vary from one person to another, all nevertheless remain unanimous on one reality: the competence of the women who work under their direction.

Adama KONE, editor of RTI 1 (Ivorian Television Broadcasting)

There are a dozen women in our editorial staff. They are editors, department heads. They are recruited by test or on recommendation. They do the same work as men.

At RTI 1, we entrust them with specific tasks to assess their determination to hold positions of responsibility. We take their skills into account when assigning them these missions. Women are qualified to occupy the same positions of responsibility as men. They have the same training and are developing group leadership skills. The female staff we employ gives us complete satisfaction. The only observation remains their sometimes problematic availability, because they deal with problems related to their status (schooling, sick children, etc.) and their fragility. It happens that for physiological reasons they do not manage to be at 100% of their capacities. The gender issue should not be seen as a complaint, but as a merit. The woman must first show her love for the profession

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and after the fight is not to discriminate. It would be unfortunate, under the pretext of having women in the newsrooms, to force them to enter.

Robert KRA, publication director. Abidjan.net

At Abidjan.net, there is no preferential policy for the promotion of women. All journalists are recruited on the basis of their skills. Those who work with us are qualified. The female staff gives us complete satisfaction.

Frédérique KRAGBE Leininger

Director and editor-in-chief of ELLE-Côte d'Ivoire magazine

Editorial Director and Columnist at Life TV.

We consider skills when recruiting female staff for highly technical positions. There is a manager accountant; 8 female outside writers; an artistic director, a marketing communication manager. They are recruited by competition.

Women are subject to the same requirements as men. The female staff gives us complete satisfaction. They are attentive and engaged. We believe that there is still enough effort to be made in diversifying the hiring of women. They are in primary positions, where society finds them reassuring, where they do not upset the established order, while they can evolve as much as men. And when they occupy positions of responsibility, it makes the headlines, because a rare phenomenon. These causes would be societal, cultural and/or related to religion. We have to give women a chance.

Jonas BAIKEH

Editor-in-chief of L'Infodrome

Our newsroom has 2 women out of 10 journalists. One is Deputy Editor. The other journalist, head of the Culture department. Above all, we are looking for professionals, regardless of gender. We take skills into account. The deputy editor is Super Ebony² 2011. They are subject to the same requirements as men and do not benefit from any special regime. They give us complete satisfaction.

André BOUA

Journaliste

² The Ebony Prize rewards the best journalists in Ivory Coast each year

Chief Editor of Life TV, Vibe Radio and Life Radio

Life TV has 06 women out of 18 journalists.

We make an effort to balance genders because society is made that way. But we also focus on their skills in our recruitments. Most of them are journalists. There is an assistant editor, two news coordinators (television news), a director. They are subject to the same requirements as their male colleagues and are treated on the same footing.

There are not enough women in senior editorial positions. This is the case within my own editorial staff despite their large number. Major newspapers and mainstream media are not run by women. One of the probable reasons is that our society itself still struggles to be led by a woman. Women have to start by shaking things up, the established order so that society supports them.

4. Discussion: a structural and near universal reality

This study showed the lower number of women in the media studied, despite their proven training and skills recognized by their superiors. Moreover, few of them occupy positions of responsibility within the newsrooms, compared to their male colleagues. On observation, this unequal phenomenon seems to derive its sources from structural realities and seems universal.

4.1. A structural reality

In fact, a look at the situation of Ivorian women in other socio-professional spheres presents practically the same picture. At the school level, for example, “despite the efforts of the government, the level of schooling for girls remains low in Ivory Coast. It is 47.2%, against 63.8% for men. This is what emerges from the mid-term review of a project entitled: "Right to inclusive education and keeping young girls in school in Ivory Coast ", initiated by the United Nations Fund for the population (Unfpa), in partnership with the Ministry of National Education and Literacy, with the financial support of the Canadian ministry called "Global Affairs Canada" (Djezou, 2021). In the same vein, the World Data Atlas mentioned that in 2015, the percentage of women students in higher education was 46.7%, and therefore lower than that of men. In 2016, the scene was similar in the profession of magistrate. The director of the school for the judiciary of the National Institute of Judicial Training, Cissé Maconi Delphine, deplored (...) the low rate of women in the profession of magistrate in Ivory Coast, where they are only 129 out of 650, or only 23% of all magistrates in the country. Presenting the school for the judiciary, during the first edition of career days for law students at Jean Lorougnon Guédé University in Daloa, Ms. Cissé indicated that the 2016 promotion of the Institute has six women for 19 men, 25 places still to be filled (AIP, 2016).

The scene is almost identical with regard to female entrepreneurship, where only 15% of businesses in Ivory Coast are owned by women, according to the president of the Commission for the Development of Female Entrepreneurship (Cdef) of the Confederation of companies from Ivory Coast (Cgeci), Touré Massogbê (Issouf, 2019).

At the level of the defense and security forces, it took until 2015 to register the first women in the ranks of the gendarmerie. Four (4) in number, as part of the 54th promotion of the Abidjan Gendarmerie School (...) for the first time in its history. The beginning of a movement to integrate the fairer sex into this elite corps (Mieu, 2015).

4.2. A near universal situation

Indeed, the visual representation of journalists in the layout of newspapers favors men more than their female colleagues. When journalistic articles are accompanied by a photograph of a journalist, they are more often male journalists than female journalists, thus contributing to reinforce the illusion that the majority of information is provided by men (Benjebria, 2015). In 2011, 86.3% of part-time journalistic jobs in France were held by women (...). The logic of work organization also hinders women's access to dominant positions in journalism and encourages their assignment to subjects, themes and sections considered to be feminine or depreciated with regard to professional values. Indeed, the organization of work reproduces a masculine vision of journalistic excellence by valuing certain forms of professional commitment (passion for the profession, total availability, etc.).

These forms hinder the integration and career of women, who occupy decision-making positions less often than their colleagues. Thus, women employed on permanent contracts remain a minority in management and supervisory positions, even if their share has increased (Montañola, Damian-Gaillard, Saitta, Op. cit.).

A study carried out by Michèle Reiser and Brigitte Gresy on “The image of women in the media” in France shows that women journalists have a limited role in producing information. According to the conclusions of the report of the said study published in 2008, despite progress, women too often remain "invisible" or "secondary" in many French media (radio, television, press, internet). The report highlights the gap still between the lives of women today and their place and image in the media, as well as the persistence of stereotypes. Women represent more than 43% of journalists today, a proportion which should increase since 60% of students in journalism schools are girls. However, the commission, which relied in particular on an analysis of the media by semiolinguistic researchers, notes that women are always less present in the content and in the

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expression or the time of The women present in the media "are more anonymous, less expert, more victims than men" underlines the report.

Thus, in the mixed programs selected, women journalists are less present than men and therefore less visible during prime time. Other choices, particularly in the television corpus, relating to television news presented by women, and there are more and more of them, would they have led to slightly different conclusions? Nothing is less certain because the weight of the presenter or the main animator has been neutralized or clearly identified and it is not certain that significant changes have been observed in the journalists called upon according to the reports (Reiser & Gresy, 2008).

Despite all the campaigns against sexism and discrimination that have been waged in recent years, the appearance of employment equity programs and the fact that the communication departments of Quebec universities today attract more large proportion of women than men, journalism remains a predominantly male field of employment in Quebec. (Poussart, 1996: 1).

In the Netherlands, about 70% of current affairs presenters are men. But, what is perhaps more interesting to note is the stereotypical choice of who is invited to these shows and how they are presented. Unless the subject is purely "feminine", all experts are men. This male preponderance and the image that is given of men and women are important, because television exerts a great influence on society (Shula Rijxman, quoted by Katharine Sarikakis, 2013).

Conclusion

Set out to determine the place of women and understand the role they play in the Ivorian media, the study revealed, both quantitatively and qualitatively (in terms of decision-making positions) that men are in the majority and dominant hierarchical position. However, this challenge of inequality is not unique to Ivory Coast and seems to be widespread throughout the world.

It should also be noted that despite this almost universal finding of the low presence of women in the media as well as the underhanded or formal discrimination to which they are subjected, the Ivorian case nevertheless shows some downside, particularly in the level of salary which remains the same for women as for men, in equal positions or with equal responsibility.

Faced with this general situation, one of the possible solutions would undoubtedly be to encourage the creation of media directed and animated mainly by women, so as to promote female excellence and the promotion of women, as shown by the example of Elle-Côte d'Ivoire in our study. It would also be interesting to encourage existing media to apply gender parity in jobs and positions of responsibility within editorial staff, through rewards and tax exemptions on production equipment. It is undoubtedly at this price that the professional quality of the female sex will be recognized and definitively admitted into the popular consciousness.

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